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ABSTRACT

In many classrooms, there are a few students who become bored and indulge in reverie. They tend to be apathetic or indifferent to course activities, and attempts to get them interested via invitational approaches are often not successful. Some of these students are not aware of how their instructors view them or that there is a problem, and the rest are made aware of their image as the instructors offer unsolicited plans for dealing with their behavior patterns. Despite this awareness, many are not bothered by it. Other problems exist with bright students who achieve far below their potential. Underachievement is often related to goal orientation and how the student views himself in relation to the goal of graduation. Getting them to feel more "smart" than "dumb" is challenging for invitational education. Many students have a degree of fatalism or procrastination in their attitudes toward the direction of their college experience. Faculty members generally care about how their students are doing in areas other than their grades, but they often feel they do not do enough to help, and they claim to be unable to make the students understand themselves. Self-concept inviting teaching strategies from a study done in Hawaii in the early 1980s are explained. Students clearly recognize the difference between inviting and uninviting teachers. Several inviting activities and assignments that students engage in are described. Remarks by students involved in these activities are noted. It is found that these students begin to reflect more about their reasons for being in college, become clearer about their goals, and take more responsibility for them. They also begin to express themselves more positively. (SM)

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VOICES OF THE DISINVITED: THE DREAM AND REALITY OF INVITATIONAL EDUCATION FOR UNDERACHIEVING AND APATHETIC STUDENTS

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In my own classes I have a few students who, every once in a while and perhaps too often in my own judgment seem to be bored or indulging in reverie. They more often than most students, ask not only me but their classmates to repeat statements or directions. These few students don't really appear to be very interested in what's going on in the course. They would rather stay on the sidelines and let others do the participating. When confronted with a required assignment they may even copy from others because they aren't interested enough to figure out what to do on their own.

I notice these same few students looking out the window, doodling or playing with their keys, purse, pen, etc. They appear not to be paying attention to class discussions and to be thinking of something else.

It concerns me that these students seem to be characterized by an attitude of indifference or apathy to course activities that either I've designed or to naturally occurring spontaneous situations introduced by their classmates that most students find interesting and challenging. These apathetic students don't seem to enjoy the course in particular, and as will be described, their college work in general.

My efforts to get them interested by using invitational approaches aren't very successful. They still display less enthusiasm; less involvement; and fewer ideas than most of their classmates. Rather than having the zest for learning and wanting to become a teacher as most of their classmates do, these few students seem to be characterized by a tendency "to drift." The

reality of how these few apathetic students perceived themselves is revealed from time to time during our discussions about their course assignments where these students share their introspective thoughts about college in general.

In these self revelations there appears to be a plea for maturity; for self knowledge; for a personal identity; for a direction in life. These students seem to want to know themselves better; to understand their goals why they want them and are they worth having at all.

Their remarks include:

1. "I don't say much in class because my teacher and other students have so many opinions about things and I don't."

2. "I don't see why others get so excited about these issues."

3. "About the few things that interest me, I change my opinions a lot, especially after I hear someone else's point of view."

4. "I don't often feel strongly about things, but I admire people who do and fight for them. I wish I had some real important goals in my life."

5. "I don't participate much in class. Maybe it's because I don't see a personal connection to what I want to do."

6. "I don't like to argue, tell others what to do or say things to others that they might not like to hear."

7. "Lots of times the class period is over before I get a chance to say something. It seems to take more time or its harder for me to focus on what's going on. I sometimes have to force myself to concentrate."

8. "In other classes lots of times I copy someone else's assignments because they don't interest me. It's not that I can't do the assignment, but I don't see the point of them."

9. "I'm bored with most of my classes. To me it doesn't seem important to say anything in class because most of the time they don't talk about what I'm interested in."

10. "I'm kind of unsettled."

11. "Even in sports I'd rather stay on the sidelines and watch."

12. "My teachers used to remind me to pay more attention to my assignments because they were often sloppy."

I've talked with other instructors of these students to check my perceptions of their behavior. Most instructors agreed that even though these students didn't always act in the ways described but in their opinion they did so more often than they should have and that the indifferent behavior pattern was noticeable.

Two intriguing thoughts resulted from my conversations with other instructors about these students who didn't seem to enjoy their courses. One was that a few of these students were not aware of how their instructors viewed their behavior or that a problem existed at all. However, most of them were made aware of the image their instructors had of them, as they were reassured, exhorted, or offered unsolicited plans for dealing with their behavior pattern by their sincere instructors. But even when they were made aware of the image their instructors had of them they, (1) didn't seem to care about it, (2) didn't express any anxiousness about it, and (3) appeared to be little bothered by it.

It is not being suggested that traditional techniques of advisement or counseling are useless. What became clear was that for these students who manifested symptoms of being unsure of

their direction in college or who were unclear about their personal commitments to teaching or course objectives the techniques of telling, reassuring, exhorting or judging appeared to have little effect upon their behavior.

As other instructors of these students shared their comments with me the pattern of their lack of purposefulness to committed ends became clearer to me. The concern and frustration of these instructors can be seen in many of their descriptions.

1. "She doesn't seem to have any initiative or inspiration. She needs to be drawn out more."
2. "She won't exert any effort or go out of her way to do anything."
3. "I'd like to give her a shove. Her grades range from A to D. She has ability but doesn't seem to care."
4. "Seems to lack initiative."
5. "She has missed some quizzes and doesn't appear to care whether or not she makes them up."
6. "Very unenthusiastic and doesn't get involved in much."
7. "Absent quite a lot, and doesn't pay too much attention when she's here (in class)."
8. "She studies and participates very little. Her facial expressions indicate complacency and little emotional involvement in what's going on."
9. "He looks so bored much of the time."
10. "She often appears to be 'off in a cloud'; no real enthusiasm."
11. "He's competent, but just doesn't give a damn!"
12. "I rarely see him. He doesn't show up in class too often."
13. "He doesn't strain himself. He's not in 'the swim of things' and participates little."
14. "A rather careless individual."

15. "A bright boy but works only on 2 cylinders. Absent a lot. A nice boy that needs to be properly motivated."

16. "Not very dependable or responsible, and cuts classes a lot."

17. "Passive; if she would only get started."

18. "She has an attitude problem. She doesn't know what's going on in class."

19. "...disinterested--shows by her appearance--almost sleepy."

20. "A vegetable."

21. "Seldom volunteers but will attempt an answer when asked."

22. "A nothing."

23. "I honestly wonder if she knows what it's all about."

Another pattern of behavior well known to teachers at all levels of schooling are students with high potential who achieve far below their potential.

Why do these bright students earn poor grades in relation to their potential? The literature on college underachievers suggests that underachievement is related in some way to goal orientation or how a student views himself in relation to their goal of graduation.

Underachievers tend to rate themselves low on a semantic differential measuring self evaluation of intelligence. How to get these bright students to see themselves as more "smart" than "dumb" is a challenge for invitational education. How do we get these students to develop a higher estimate of their own sense of adequacy; to feel that they are persons of worth and have much to

be proud of instead of feelings dissatisfied with their school work in particular and their future in general?

The estimates of their own adequacy includes these disinvited perceptions:

1. "I don't have very much to show or be proud of for my time in college."

2. "I'm not too satisfied with myself."

3. "Am I the equal of my classmates? I'm not sure."

4. "I scored pretty well on some of my exams, but I don't seem to be working up to my ability as often as I should."

5. "My teachers say I don't plan my time for studying very well. I do tend to let things slide and my mind wander. Others seem to concentrate better than me."

Other remarks by students reflected on their own responsibility over the direction of their college experience. A degree of fatalism or procrastination is noticed. Rather than being the "Captain of their fate, the master of their soul," they say:

6. "I could do a lot better if I really concentrated."

7. I sometimes overlook parts of my assignments, so they don't turn out nearly as well as they could."

8. "I often put off finishing papers."

9. "Even when I was younger I found school uninteresting unless the subject matter dealt with an area which I was especially interested in. Then I did much better."

10. "I skim over requirements."

11. "In high school my report card said, 'This student is not work to capacity because of not sticking to the job.'"

12. "I knew I could do better in school but as long as I passed it was O.K. with me."

13. "I don't plan to ever use some of my courses so why should I bother a lot about theme. Some of my friends are doing pretty well without those courses."

14. "Lots of students don't do well in school unless they're pushed. I could do better if I really had to."

I shared my concern for these underachieving students with my colleagues who also had them in their classes. I wanted to see if they behaved in a similar way with others. But more importantly I wanted to get some hints about what seemed to work in getting these students to become more purposeful about teaching and to achieve closer to their estimated abilities.

With few exceptions most of my colleagues' replies acknowledged their awareness that a problem did exist.

Two of the most typical replies were:

"My classes are too large. My students don't have much opportunity for discussion, let alone probing, I really don't know my students as well as I should."

"I wish I had more time to know them better and to help them. I've been meaning to check on them more thoroughly but I never seemed to have enough time. I did have a chance to work with a few of them, but not as many as I would have liked."

Most of the faculty members felt that they didn't do enough to help their students while they had them. They desired to do as much as they could for their students. Rare indeed was the instructor who didn't seem to care about how his students were doing other than their grades.

"I don't know what to do with some of my students who behave in immature ways. I'd just like to sit down with a group of the faculty and talk about them."

Many instructors indicated a sincere concern for helping their students who behaved in some of the ways described. Many of the instructors I spoke with revealed that they have tried different ways to help their students. Most of their techniques were of a directive nature; indicating to the students their problem and then giving some advice.

With one exception, all other faculty members reported that, "I haven't been too successful in the past. I don't know how to get these students to understand themselves."

One instructor told me that one of his techniques in talking to these "real tough cases" was to "lay down the law." He later added, "Now that I think of it I haven't changed many minds this way."

His parting insightful remarked touched upon the essence of the problem; "Some of these discontented hard to reach kids seem to improve once they begin to see a purpose in college and get their goals and values straightened away."

The following disclosure reminded me of the study conducted by David Furuto with his students in his required mathematics course at Windward Community College in Hawaii, which we presented at AERA in New York, 1982.

> "In my course in mathematics we don't need discussions. You're either right or wrong. You read the chapter, do the problems, and have them checked."

David was interested in determining if strategies designed to help students develop a positive academic self-concept would have an affect upon (1) student's attitudes toward math, meaning their liking and enjoyment of and increased interest in

mathematics, (2) reducing their anxiety and tension in common situations that interfere with the solving of mathematical problems, and (3) their achieving closer to their mathematics potential and ability.

Samples of self-concept inviting teaching strategies used included David as the course instructor (a) providing assignments which could be done with a high probability of success, (b) making positive written and oral comments on student's work, (c) using the name of students frequently, (d) praising students when they performed at a level commensurate with their ability, (e) encouraging students to express ideas and personal experiences in relation to the mathematics topics and to make students feel what they said was worthwhile, (f) using mathematic applications which were relevant to students' interests and goals, (g) using students as tutors, and (h) interviewing students individually about their personal and academic interests, activities, and goals.

Analysis of the data from standardized criterion referenced mathematics anxiety, attitude and achievement scales revealed that David's students over the period of one semester in comparison with a control group in a "normally taught classes," (1) performed better in mathematics, (2) developed more favorable attitudes towards mathematics, (3) had less anxiety about mathematics, and (4) performed more commensurately with their mathematic ability than the control group.

Therefore, we concluded that more attention needs to be paid to the affective and inviting variables that influence mathematical learning in particular and school learning in general.

Hints about how this might be done were analyzed from the remarks of students who described the attitudes of teachers towards them. Sadly these attitudes range from uninviting teachers who reflect a lack of faith in their students by criticizing them publicly to those who were caring and trusting.

This last group of students' voices reveal that intuitively they recognize the differences between inviting and uninviting teachers. They suspect the differences between those teachers who create a class climate that tends towards self determination and originality rather than those who look for conformity, where students are overly dependent on them.

1. "Some teachers like things about students and let them know it. Other's if they do like things keep it to themselves, except for grades."

2. "One instructor sets goals that are too high, at least initially. Not too many of us are successful in that course."

3. "I like when teachers make an effort to find out what each student does well and takes the time to mention it to us."

4. "Not only does he give us a chance to state our opinions about issues but tries to make us feel that our thoughts are important even though he and other students don't agree sometimes."

5. "Some teachers assume you know nothing about their subject. Some of us don't, but some of us do."

6. "She often asks personal questions, 'What do you believe.' It puts you on the spot a bit but even though I may not answer at the time I tend to think about the question after class."

7. "When our class was asked to make recommendations for future course activities, we held back a bit to see if she was sincere."

8. "In her course everyone is expected to learn the same things in the same way. In another course I found out about 'learning styles' and realized that I do better with divergent and cooperative assignments that appeal to my emotions and imagination."

9. "I know its hard to do and it's not meant as a personal put down, but I'd rather be criticized as much in private. I have one instructor who when he has to correct something during our group evaluation asks if its o.k. to discuss it in front of the group or would we rather go over the problem alone. Most of the time was say it's alright to discuss it publicly because we know our group trusts each other."

Its not difficult to understand why students prefer teachers who are amiable and considerate rather than those who are cool or unconcerned about how well individuals are learning. This is not a terribly profound notion. What is important is to see if inviting teaching behaviors used in a consistent and concerted manner would have an effect upon apathetic and underachieving students' behavior patterns.

The inviting activities and assignments that students engaged in weekly included:

1. An opportunity for students to observe and participate in teaching individual or small groups of children in a grade level of their choice. It was hoped that this experience would be a way for them to test if their goal to teach would be satisfying enough to them to make their own commitment toward the goal of becoming a teacher. Acting upon a goal to realize it is a way of initially and periodically testing that goal to see if it is good for oneself.

2. Students were asked as many divergent and personal questions regarding their beliefs about teaching as well as the usual convergent questions about course content. In asking these clarifying questions, I wanted to create a climate in which the students felt free to express themselves. I tried to show an interest in what the student said without expressing any signs of approval or disapproval. The intent of the questions was to stimulate thought and to get the student to ponder and speculate about his answers. The technique was to react to a students answers by gently challenging but not disputing, by provoking reflection but not disapproving; by leading but not directing; by indicating understanding without praising to get the student to examine his own attitudes and beliefs about teaching. It was hoped that the non-evaluative comments would be different from the replies of "That's right," "That's good," or "You're wrong there," that the student more commonly encounters in school.

3. Students were asked to take leadership roles by teaching others in microteaching situations.

4. They were required to role play being a teacher with children during these microteaching sessions. These activities were designed to get a student to imagine himself more clearly in teaching situations and to help him understand what his purposes are in teaching; what he wants to do; why he wants to do it and to decide if it is worth doing at all.

5. Students were asked to make choices in the designing of their microteaching lessons. Although all students had to plan, teach and evaluate a microlesson, focusing on skills, using similar criteria, they had to choose the grade level, the textbook, the skill it was related to and the kind of skill they wanted to develop. Rather than just evaluating the microlesson during and after it was taught, students were offered the option to review their plan with me before conducting their lesson. It was found that not only was their success greater, but they accepted advice better during the process of their planning than after their plan was completed. The planning of these lessons and our personal conference were seen as a way for each student to make choices and decisions after consideration of alternatives. The conducting of each microlesson was a way for the student to test if they were pleased with their choices after acting upon them. It was hoped that these choosing, planning, and teaching activities would be a way for students in a relatively safe environment to realize if teaching was a goal that they wanted to integrate into their life's activities.

Several kinds of activities and assignments were planned for these apparently apathetic or underachieving students both in and out of class as part of the course in "Foundations of Curriculum and Instruction." John Dewey warned that we cannot say that we really know what our ends are before we have reflected upon the probable consequences of carrying them out. These activities of microteaching to peers and observing and participating with children went beyond the usual verbal and written commitments students are asked to make to teaching.

After a semester of engaging these apathetic and underachieving students in the weekly group and individual inviting activities and conferences described I asked them to evaluate these activities. I explained, "Since I'm still trying out these kinds of course activities and individual conferences I would very much like to know what you think about the whole process."

All students in the course participated in all the course activities including the invitational activities and processes described, but the apathetic and underachieving students were engaged in them more frequently. They spent more time in them by role playing, teaching children, microteaching peers, answering divergent questions, and individually planning and evaluating with me in private conferences. Several of these students began to see themselves as "special" and perhaps began to exhibit a "halo" effect.

All they knew was that I was trying out some new course instructional activities. No mention was ever made directly of their apathetic or underachieving behavior.

One underachieving student wrote his impressions of the course activities:

> "These talks between you and us for the purpose of discussing our attitudes, problems and goals in preparing to teach is a good idea in my opinion. I feel this course is useful because it helps college students to be better understood by the faculty. The students you spent most of the time with, I felt, should not just be the 'top students' in the class, but should include everyone." (It was not clear how he came to regard himself as a 'top student' insofar as he was originally identified as an underachiever!)

The following remarks were written by an underachieving student. It's interesting to note that several students came to see their role in participating in these pilot course activities as a <u>help to me</u>!. He advised:

> "The conferences we have had have proven to me to be very helpful and informative. I have gained <u>insight</u> to many different things. The conferences have allowed me to talk to a teacher as I never had before. I feel that the common boundary line between teacher and student has been somewhat eliminated.
>
> "My impression of teachers have changed somewhat. I now realize more fully that teachers are essentially no different than anyone else.
>
> "I don't know how much I have contributed to this course revision, but I was glad to contribute what I could.
>
> "As far as my opinion of the conferences, microteaching and O-P is concerned, I think they will prove helpful in the future. I am wondering why such activities haven't been set up in the past? I think there should be some sort of a get-to-know-each-other campaign for teachers and students. I don't know if I would have the same impression if this course had been taught by anyone else."

A young lady who was an underachiever wrote:

> "I think the idea of asking students personal questions is a good one. It gives the student a chance to express his opinion in more than a one or two word answer.
>
> "Students often don't give their true feelings on assignments because they can't. I find that many times I have an opinion that does not quite fit with any of the expected answers. Often too I am unsure of the exact situation and find that the situation would have a strong influence on my answer.
>
> "The planning and evaluating talks give a more personal feeling to the course. It is easier to answer an interested person rather than a piece of paper. The microteaching gives the opportunity to choose the subjects and grade levels which interest students most.

The summarizing remarks of the next young lady were particularly interesting to me. She was a student who failed to improve her grades.

She showed little initiative in class and in our planning conferences, which was evidenced not only by her statements, but also by her facial expressions and posture.

She wrote of the course activities:

> "I really don't know how to start this. I was going to say I thought the course activities were interesting, but that isn't the right word because the purpose of them wasn't to be interesting. I enjoyed most of them, although sometimes I wasn't too interested in the topic--that was my fault because I hadn't brought in student texts or plans for my microlessons. I have always found it hard to organize and express my ideas and opinions. These activities have made me think more about them and to express them more often. It would be easier for me if you gave me a certain topic to teach. I liked planning and microteaching in my group so I could compare my ideas with theirs. Sometimes I'm not too sure of what to teach. I get kind of confused, but I do think its a good idea for us to bring in our own plans and materials. These show what grade level we're really interested in teaching."

The summary of the next underachiever indicates the natural defenses that many of the students had during the first couple of microteaching planning conferences and post microteaching role playing discussions. She wrote:

> "I enjoyed the microteaching very much. It helped me greatly because it made me more aware of things that my thoughts had not dwelled on previously. I think it will help me in the future to be able to talk to my instructors in a more relaxed manner.
>
> "The first few weeks, I felt that your questions were asked in order to find things out about me as a person, rather than my opinions about teaching."

The next young lady, who was identified as apathetic, was a particularly interesting though puzzling student. Her instructors had identified her as, "silent as a grave," "an enigma," "doesn't seem to have her heart in it," "I can't reach her," and "just shrugs when I ask her something."

The contrast of her classroom behavior and her sparkle and interest during our individual microteaching planning sessions was so great that I rechecked with her other instructors to make sure that she was the same student they had identified.

> "Dr. Lang:
>
> "You have asked me to write a little paragraph or two about our class activities.
>
> "I only wish we had more time to carry on our talks and had begun them sooner. I enjoy being asked my views on teaching certain subjects because it gives me a chance to express myself truthfully and to the point. I definitely think that these activities should be continued next semester."
>
> "When you sit in our group and ask questions during our post microteching evaluations, I feel each person's lesson should be evaluated alone and not in front of the group because some students are shy and are not willing to speak out so that you could get their full understanding of their lesson plan.

"These are the only suggestions I have. I wish to say that the course activities have been a great deal of fun and I have enjoyed them. I hope you continue them next semester."

The suggestions of this next student previously identified as apathetic, regarding professor-student relations and the role of self-direction in the life of a prospective teacher is evident.

"I think it's a good idea to try new activities in courses for teachers. This should be undertaken after each professor has assured himself that he is taking every possible step to become a better teacher and raise the standards of the college.

"I always felt that students acquired most of their ideas about teaching before they took these courses. Now I'm beginning to wonder. A student tends to give his professors the answers he thinks they want. He can do this in writing as well as in a group or individual conference. But I think a student would talk more freely to a professor he knows and who knows him. It's often hard to give answers with integrity but generally speaking I think this is a sound course and the activities should be continued. I hope this will be of some help to you in planning the course for next semester."

The next student who was earlier identified as comparatively apathetic summarized her thoughts about the course activities she engaged in:

"You've asked me to give my opinion about our class activities together with any suggestions for the future. I certainly enjoyed most of them. They gave me the opportunity to express my attitudes on many subjects, and a few times I learned that my plan wasn't as complete as it should have been. It needed more thought.

"I think you should try to allow for more individual conferences during class time. The more you do this the more students would gradually begin to share more freely and comfortably their ideas about teaching. If the activities accomplished in a small way, what you were seeking I think they should be tried again next year using the lessons learned from this years trial run."

Part of the remarks of the next student, who some of her instructors identified as indifferent to their course content, hint at the need for self knowledge and a direction in her life.

"Dear Dr. Lang,

"It has been a pleasure talking to you in our short meetings about my microteaching and O-P plans.

"I am glad to find someone who seems to care about students or someone who will take time to listen rather than just telling. It seemed to me that some of the professors here have little concern for the student and that teaching is just a job. This may be wrong.

"In these discussions about my teaching I could examine my standards or ideas which I hadn't thought about.

"I don't know if I have helped you in any way, but I think these conferences have helped me. After these discussions about my teaching I feel more confident in myself and if I could keep this confidence, I could overcome the fear of participating in classroom discussions.

"I haven't any ideas or plans of changing the methods or discussions in the course. They seemed to be effective the way they were."

The underlining, in the particularly revealing remarks of the last student who was an underachiever, is mine. As in most of the other students' letters, she also remarked that she was glad she could help me.

"Dear Dr. Lang,

"As I once told you before, our weekly meetings about my microteaching participation were an inconvenience. I don't know if inconvenience is the appropriate word to use or not. This fits in with one of my poorer characteristics--my inability or should I say laziness in accepting responsibilities.

"I think, and this is only my opinion, that you have helped the students you have talked with. Often time it is good to talk to someone <u>who is interested in what you are saying</u>. It is good to talk about problems and certain ideals and

feelings and know they are in confidence. Many times I have left your office feeling a lot better having talked out my plans for teaching.

"The conferences have been very relaxing and never have I felt ill at ease speaking with you about anything. I don't believe anyone has.

"I want to thank you because it was a learning experience--a good one."

Three results seemed clearly related to the invitational techniques and processes the students engaged in. One was that these underachieving and apathetic students began to reflect more and more about their reasons for being in college and in a teacher education program in particular. Their remarks indicated that they were becoming clearer about their goals and were taking more responsibility for them. It could be argued that this increased clarification between how they saw themselves and how they wanted to be together with their perceptions of how others (their professor and peers) viewed them was related to developing a clearer sense of self. Evidence that the reflective process was taking place included these reflections:

1. "I don't know. I really haven't thought about it much."
2. In referring to a plan discussed during the previous meeting, a student remarked, "I've been doing a lot of thinking about it and..."
3. "I'm not quite so sure any more about my feelings about..."
4. "I've thought about things a lot more."
5. "I've really thought through, back at the dorm, and realized that my ideas about children getting along with each other were so vague."
6. "In the past I haven't thought much about the future."

7. "One thing I thought about after our last talk was whether or not..."

8. "I'd like to clear up some of the things I said last time because I think I gave you the wrong impression."

9. "I never quite realized the commuter's point of view before."

10. "I spoke to some other students to find out what they thought about what we talked about last time."

11. "I'm not sure, I'll have to think about it some more."

12. "I think I gave you the wrong notion that last time we talked."

13. "Now that we have discussed it, I'm doubly sure--that's what I want to do in my plan."

A second result was that students began to express themselves in a more positive manner. As the semester progressed, negative statements such as; (1) "I don't think...," (2) "I wouldn't care if...," (3) "I don't like to participate in...," and (4) "Children shouldn't..."; became fewer and more positive statements such as; (1) "I'm very interested in...," (2) "Kids should learn to...," (3) "I like to work with," and (4) "It just gives me a good feeling..."; became more frequent.

A simple tabulation of these students comments revealed that during the first half of the semester most of their comments were negative. During the second half of the semester most of their comments became positive, an increase of over 50%. By the end of the semester these students were making twice as many "I" - "Me" statements as compared to the beginning of the semester. This relationship between increased positiveness and personal purposefulness was true for every student originally identified as apathetic or underachieving.

The third result was that about 80% of the underachievers improved their grade point averages.

At the end of the semester I asked other instructors of each underachieving student about the student's performance in their course. Most knew nothing of the concentrated inviting approaches I had used. (The underlining in their remarks is mine.)

A sample of instructor's comments about their underachieving students included:

1. "I think the reason for his academic improvement is that he seems <u>better adjusted</u> now. He's more sure of himself and knows who to study better."

2. "He's more professional now in his <u>attitude</u>. He had some gripes about things in class, but he handled them well."

3. "He seems much happier and <u>determined</u> to do something about his ability."

4. "His <u>attitude</u> has really improved. He's more eager to help now in situations where I formerly had to 'pull teeth."

5. "I think her <u>values</u> have changed. She pays more attention to her studies."

6. "I used to think that she was just dumb!"

The one suggestion that practically all of the instructors I talked with offered was that there were lots of students who needed to be clearer about their commitment to teaching and their course work leading to their certification as teachers. They also agreed that the job of helping those who have achievement or "attitude" problems was too big for just a few specialized guidance counselors to cope with; that this problem was the

concern of the whole faculty and that these personally involving experiences should start early in the teacher education program.

If students then can become more positive; more purposeful and achieve better as a result of inviting processes not only may benefits accrue to colleges in conserving time, money, and effort normally wasted on drop outs, underachieving and uncommitted students, but to these students themselves as they begin to more clearly comprehend their direction towards and purposefulness for teaching.